

with the introduction of the EGE, the number of bribes—*blat* (the use of informal networks to obtain goods and services)—and other violations in the university admissions process have remained the same (34%) or even increased (30%). Only a small group of survey participants (13%) believes that the EGE has helped to decrease those violations.

Our own research, conducted in 2013 at selected universities in the Russian Far East, shows similar results: 31 percent of the survey respondents observed some violations during the EGE; 14 percent of them observed these violations personally, while 17 percent referenced their relatives or friends. These violations include disseminating exam questions before the examination, using mobile phones (for Internet searches or SMS), receiving help from the on-site proctors, and reopening sealed test envelopes to correct mistakes.

Besides the EGE, there is another opportunity for cheating and corruption in the university admissions process. In our survey, 12 percent of the participants had heard about other types of violations during the university admissions process from their friends and relatives, and only 4 percent had any personal experience with them. These violations include monetary and nonmonetary payments, for example, to gain admission to a budgeted place—a place for a student that is paid for by the state and not by individual tuition. Another possible violation involves bribes or preferential treatment, such as receiving a special contract—preferential conditions for students, such as a contract between industry and university.

There are a few recent tendencies worth noting: the number of orphans, students with disabilities, and students with diplomas for achievements in academic competitions (*olympiady*) has increased significantly. Those three categories also receive preferential treatment during the university admissions process. The approach here is selective, however: one the respondents in our study mentioned that a real orphan was not considered, and other students complained that not all results of *olympiady* were counted.

WHO BENEFITS FROM HIGH EGE SCORES?

The first group of beneficiaries is school graduates—the potential students. High scores might open the doors of elite universities to them and increase the chance for getting a state-budgeted place. The second group is the universities. The Higher School of Economics monitors almost all Russian universities according to the average EGE scores of their applicants. Freshmen with more than 70 points (out of 100) are considered to be high-performance students, while freshmen with less than 56 points are the opposite. Universities that accept students with a score of less than 56 might be singled out by the Russian Ministry of Education and Research for negative sanctions. The third group of benefi-

ciaries is the secondary schools: the more graduates with high EGE scores they have, the better the schools' reputation. This interdependence of all involved actors—students, universities, and secondary schools—might make remedying the various forms of corruption at this level difficult. These forms of corruption might not even involve money: During the EGE, a school teacher might leave a class for a few minutes and thus give young people an opportunity to take out crib sheets or ponies. The teacher might be guided only by his/her concern for the professional future of the students.

The question for the future is whether this new system will hinder or actually promote corruption. In Russia, where corruption is endemic, it might not disappear completely. Nevertheless, the introduction of the EGE has been a very important step in the Russian education system, encouraging universities to work more transparently and permitting the students' mobility to increase significantly since its introduction. The data from Rosstat, the Russian Federal State Statistic Service, shows a high influx of students in regions (out of 85), which since 2009 have the highest educational standards. On the other hand, regions with low standards are suffering. Our data from the Russian Far East prove this tendency: every year, the major universities in urban areas enroll more and more students from small towns and villages. ■

Survey of *International Higher Education* Readers

ARIANE DE GAYARDON AND DAVID A. STANFIELD

Ariane de Gayardon and David A. Stanfield are graduate assistants at the Center for International Higher Education at Boston College. E-mail: ariane.degayardon@bc.edu and david.stanfield@bc.edu.

For the first time, we surveyed our readers concerning their views and perspectives in order to improve this publication. We are quite gratified by the very positive views expressed in the survey. Nearly 20 percent of subscribers from 86 different countries completed the survey. Of these, an overwhelming majority expressed satisfaction with *International Higher Education's* article length and geographic coverage. Respondents also indicated very clearly their sense that our content is of consistent quality and provides accurate and reliable information on the range of topics presented.

The demographic information provided by survey respondents revealed several noteworthy trends: 55 percent of our respondents are senior-level professionals, while 29 percent are at the midpoint in their career. Only 43 percent of respondents reside in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The remaining 57 percent were well spread out across 82 countries and all continents, which aligns well with our goal for broad global distribution.

Ninety percent of respondents indicated that the geographic coverage of *IHE* content was acceptable or excellent, yet select survey comments highlight the fact that there is still some room for improvement. Some readers specified a desire for more articles about countries commonly underrepresented in the literature. Subscribers specifically mentioned they would like additional coverage of the Middle East, Latin America, Africa and, more broadly, the global south.

Among the topics suggested for ongoing attention from *IHE*, the most popular were internationalization and globalization, cross-border higher education, higher education reform efforts, comparative studies, and governance and administration. Furthermore, respondents are interested in specific country reports and regional analysis. Interestingly, academic corruption, student recruitment, academic freedom, and funding/finance are the topics of least interest to our readers. More generally, respondents appreciated the non-US and transnational nature of our coverage, as captured by this reader, “[*IHE* is] genuinely international and comparative, as opposed to focused on US perspectives on the rest of the world.”

The manageable length of *IHE* articles was a point of satisfaction for over 80 percent of respondents, which this reader summarizes well, “the articles are easy to read, well structured, and straight to the point, giving the reader a fast and precise response to what he/she was looking for.” A strong majority of respondents agreed that we should continue offering a balance of opinion/analysis articles and report-oriented articles. More than 90 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that *IHE* produces articles of con-

sistent quality, and 94 percent agreed or strongly agreed that *IHE* provides accurate and reliable information.

Some readers appreciated the timeliness of *IHE*; specifically, our ability to release articles related to current events happening around the world. One reader said, *IHE* is a “timely publication...[and] this is the most precious characteristic which distinguishes *IHE* from other [publications].”

Only 11 percent of respondents receive just the print version of *IHE*; 53 percent receive only the electronic version via e-mail; and 36 percent receive both a print and electronic copy. Though printing is increasingly cost prohibitive, we acknowledge the significance of the print version and plan to continue offering a paper copy as long as we maintain sufficient grant funding. Some readers, like this one, feel strongly that we should continue to offer print copies, “I love the fact that it’s still in print format. I keep all my copies and refer back to them over time.”

Our readers are quite satisfied with *IHE*, and we do not plan major changes. We were especially gratified by the numerous positive comments similar to this one:

“I think *IHE* is a remarkable contribution. It is obviously good for those policymakers who consider information sources. But it also is useful for the most-informed scholars. Nobody is an expert in all geographic or subject matters. A scholar can surmise much from even the pure descriptive accounts.”

The Center is extremely grateful for the thoughtful feedback provided by survey respondents and looks forward to receiving ongoing input from readers with new ideas for topics we can cover and new authors who can add their voices to these important conversations. We will continue to emphasize critical analysis of key higher education issues that are relevant to a global audience. We will strive to feature countries and regions that may not receive wide attention elsewhere. Most importantly perhaps, we will do our best to maintain a critical edge and provide alternative perspectives.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Carpenter, Joel, Perry L. Glanzer, and Nicholas S. Lantinga, eds. *Christian Higher Education: A Global Reconnaissance*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014. 346 pp. \$36 (pb). ISBN 978-0-8028-7105-3. Web site: www.Eerdmans.com.

An analytic overview of trends in Christian higher education worldwide, this

volume includes chapters concerning key countries and regions. Among the areas discussed are India, Korea, Kenya, China, Nigeria, western Europe, postcommunist Europe, the United States, Canada, and others. Some of the chapters discuss the historical development of Christian higher education, while others discuss only the current situation. The authors point to a

significant growth of Christian higher education worldwide.

de Wit, Hans, Fiona Hunter, Linda Johnson, and Hans-Georg van Liempd, eds. *Possible Futures: The Next 25 Years of Internationalization of Higher Education*. Amsterdam, Netherlands: European Association for Higher Education, 2013. 238